

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 226474

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY SISCO

FOL BEIRUT SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO ALGIERS AMMAN JERUSALEM

JIDDA KUWAIT MOSCOW RABAT TEL AVIV TRIPOLI TUNIS USUN

BAGHDAD NOV 15, 1973 REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 13172

DEPT PASS USINT CAIRO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINS XF UR

SUBJECT: VISIT BY PLO DELEGATION TO MOSCOW

REF: BEIRUT 13079

1. APPEARS THAT 'ARAFAT'S PLANNED TRIP TO MOSCOW IS OFF, AT LEAST FOR TIME BEING. PLO (WAFA) DAILY BULLETIN ANNOUNCED NOV 14 THAT VISIT "WILL NOT TAKE PLACE AT PRESENT TIME", ALTHOUGH IT ADDED THAT "SHOULD NEED ARISE, TOP-LEVEL PLO DEL WILL PROBABLY VISIT USSR AFTER ARAB SUMMIT CONFERENCE" IN ALGIERS.

2. ABOVE DEVELOPMENT, IN OUR VIEW, STEMS IN PART FROM
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FACT THAT IRAQI GOVT--INTRANSIGENT ON SUBJECT OF FEDAYEEN

ASSOCIATION WITH EFFORT TOWARD PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT AND HOPEFUL, SHOULD NEGOTIATION FAIL, OF PICKING UP PIECES OF DISORGANIZED FEDAYEEN MOVEMENT (BAGHDAD 592, BEIRUT 12826) HAS EVIDENTLY SUCCEEDED IN PREVENTING FORMATION OF COMPREHENSIVE PLO DEL. IRAQI NEGATIVISM, FEARED BY SOVS AS WELL AS 'ARAFAT (BEIRUT 13079), REINFORCES OTHER OPPOSITION TO FEDAYEEN PARTICIPATION IN FORTHCOMING PEACE CONFERENCE (AND IMPLICIT ACQUIESCENCE IN SETTLEMENT WITH ISRAEL) AMONG PFLP, ALF AND FEDAYEEN RANK-AND-FILE (INCLUDING SOME PLO SUBSIDIARY ORGANIZATIONS OF WRITERS, STUDENTS, ETC.). THIS OPPOSITION REPORTEDLY CAUSED 'ARAFAT HAVE SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT HIS HIGHLY-PUBLICIZED TRIP TO MOSCOW FOR PURPOSE OF AGREEING PARTICIPATE IN TALKS.

3. HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THAT AN EQUALLY IMPORTANT FACTOR IN DECISION POSTPONE TRIP TO MOSCOW IS DESIRE BY ARAB GOVTS, LED BY ALGIERS, DECIDE QUESTION OF PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION AT NOV 26 ARAB SUMMIT WHERE PLO WILL BE PRESENT. WITH COVER OF CALL FROM ARAB SUMMIT, IT WOULD BE EASIER FOR 'ARAFAT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE AND WITHSTAND OPPOSITION, WHEREAS HIS APPEARING TO MAKE DECISION WITHOUT VISIBLE SUPPORT FROM ARAB GOVTS AND UNDER APPARENT SOV AUSPICES WOULD INCREASE HIS VULNERABILITY AND EVEN ANGER SOME ARAB GOVTS WHO FAVOR IDEA OF PLO PARTICIPATION BUT DO NOT LIKE IDEA OF IT SEEMING TO RESULT FROM SOV EFFORTS.

4. NEW SCENARIO, AS WE UNDERSTAND IT, WILL BE FOR ARAB SUMMIT TO DECIDE OR RECOMMEND THAT PLO PARTICIPATE IN PEACE TALKS. THIS WOULD ALLOW 'ARAFAT AND OTHERS TO CLAIM THEY HAVE HAD PARTICIPATION IMPOSED ON THEM AS ALTERNATIVE TO PLO PARTICIPATION WOULD BE WITHDRAWAL OF SUPPORT BY ARAB GOVTS AND ASSUMPTION BY KING HUSSEIN OF ROLE OF REPRESENTING PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AT PEACE TALKS. ASSUMING ARAB GOVTS RECOMMEND AND PLO AGREES AT ALGIERS TO PARTICIPATE IN PEACE TALKS, 'ARAFAT WOUL PROBABLY FEEL ABLE PROCEED TO MOSCOW--WITH OR WITHOUT PFLP AND ALF PARTICIPATION AND GOI NEUTRALITY--TO ENGAGE IN DISCUSSIONS WITH SOVS PRIOR TO BEGINNING PEACE TALKS. WE DO NOT RPT NOT BELIEVE 'ARAFAT DECISION POSTPONE MOSCOW
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TRIP INDICATES ANY CHANGE IN PLO (I.E., FATAH-SA'IQA) PREDISPOSITION PARTICIPATE IN PEACE TALKS. (BEIRUT 13009). BUFFUM UNQUOTE RUSH

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